

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 ACDA-07 ARA-06 /096 W

-----131618Z 055851 /44

R 131542Z APR 77

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1680

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR,FR,CG

SUBJECT: Giscard's Statement on Zaire: European
Element

REF: PARIS 10661

SUMMARY: IN EXPLAINING THE REASONS FOR FRANCE'S
DECISION TO ASSIST ZAIRE MILITARILY, GISCARD TOLD
TELEVIZED PRESS CONFERENCE APRIL 12 THAT FRANCE IS
ACTING FOR EUROPE IN A GESTURE OF SOLIDARITY TOWARD
AFRICA. GOF INFORMED EC-9 PARTNERS IN ADVANCE OF
ACTION TO START ZAIRE AIRLIFT, BUT THERE WERE
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APPARENTLY NO CONSULTATIONS. GISCARD APPEARS TO BE
USING THIS TACTIC TO ALLAY FEARS OF SOLITARY FRENCH
INVOLVEMENT, BECAUSE HE HAS A PHILOSOPHIC COMMITMENT
TO EUROPE, AND BECAUSE HE WANTS TO DEMONSTRATE
INDEPENDENCE FROM THE US IN AN ELECTION YEAR.
END SUMMARY.

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. IN GISCARD'S TELEVIZED PRESS CONFERENCE DEVOTED TO FOREIGN POLICY SUBJECTS APRIL 12, HE STRESSED THAT FRANCE'S MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO ZAIRE REPRESENTS A MANIFESTATION OF EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY WITH AFRICA, AND NOT JUST A UNILATERAL FRENCH ACTION. HE LINKED EUROPE TO THE ZAIRE ACTION THREE TIMES DURING HIS EXPLANATION AS FOLLOWS:

A. "AS FAR AS SOLIDARITY IS CONCERNED, WE ARE SHOWING THAT A STRONG SOLIDARITY EXISTS BETWEEN EUROPE AND AFRICA. EUROPE CANNOT BE INDIFFERENT TO WHAT GOES ON IN AFRICA. IT WOULD CONSTITUTE THE WORST KIND OF INSOUCIANCE ON EUROPE'S PART. AND WE WANTED ON THIS OCCASION TO GIVE A SIGNAL OF SOLIDARITY BETWEEN EUROPE AND AFRICA."

B. "I WANT TO EXPRESS MY PROFOUND SENTIMENTS FOR AFRICA. AFRICA IS A CONTINENT THAT I KNOW VERY WELL, AND THAT EUROPE SHOULD CONSIDER AS A BROTHER CONTINENT."

C. "AND THAT IS WHY FRANCE WANTED TO SEND AFRICA A SIGNAL (OF SOLIDARITY AND SECURITY). AND AS FAR AS I AM CONCERNED, I PREFERRED THAT FRANCE SEND THIS SIGNAL WITHOUT THE ACCORD OF THE UNITED STATES. BECAUSE IT IS THE OCCASION TO DEMONSTRATE FOR ONCE THAT THERE ARE SOME SITUATIONS AND PROBLEMS

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TOWARD WHICH EUROPE SHOULD REACT BY ITSELF. AND THERE (ZAIRE), EUROPE HAS MANIFESTED ITSELF THROUGH THE INTERMEDIARY OF FRANCE. NATURALLY, WE INFORMED OUR EUROPEAN PARTNERS IN ADVANCE, AND WE WILL HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS THE SITUATION WITH THEM, BUT I FEEL THAT THE FACT FRANCE IS EMPHASIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF THE AFRICAN PROBLEM ON BEHALF OF

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 PARIS 10771

EUROPE, AND NOT BY FRANCE OUTSIDE OF EUROPE, IS
IN ITSELF A SIGN OF AN INDEPENDENT AND RESPONSIBLE
POLICY." END UNCLASSIFIED

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2. QUAI D'ORSAY INFORMS US THAT INSTRUCTIONS WERE
SENT TO FRENCH EMBASSIES IN ALL EC-9 CAPITALS
APRIL 8 TO INFORM PARTNERS OF GOF AIRLIFT OPERATION
BETWEEN MOROCCO AND ZAIRE. EC-9 COLLEAGUES IN PARIS
CONFIRM THIS, BUT STRESS THAT THERE WERE NO CON-
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SULTATIONS AS SUCH. FRG COLLEAGUE, HOWEVER, SAID
IT COULD NOT BE EXCLUDED THAT GISCARD AND SCHMIDT
HAD TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WHICH MIGHT BE CONSIDERED
CONSULTATIONS. HE CHECKED WITH BOTH FOREIGN MINISTRY
AND CHANCERY IN BONN, AND BOTH SAID THEY KNEW OF
NO PHONE CALL, BUT INDICATED THAT SCHMIDT WAS IN
HAMBURG AT THE TIME AND COULD HAVE RECEIVED A
CALL THERE.

3. COMMENT: WE INTERPRET GISCARD'S EMPHASIS ON THE EUROPEAN CONNECTION AS BEING MOTIVATED BY THE FOLLOWING:

A. A NEED TO LIMIT DOMESTIC CRITICISM THAT FRANCE IS BECOMING INVOLVED IN A DISTANT CIVIL WAR. FRANCE ACTING FOR EUROPE SUPPOSEDLY ALLAYS THE FEAR THAT THE GOF IS BLUNDERING INTO A TYPE SITUATION.

B. GISCARD'S PHILOSOPHICAL COMMITMENT TO EUROPE. THE REST OF THE PRESS CONFERENCE SHOWED THAT GISCARD BELIEVES IN POLITICAL EUROPE ON A PHILOSOPHICAL LEVEL, EVEN THOUGH HIS ABILITY TO ACT IS SEVERELY LIMITED.

C. IN AN ELECTION PERIOD, GISCARD HAS TO DEMONSTRATE INDEPENDENCE FROM THE UNITED STATES IN THE GAULLIST TRADITION. HENCE, "WE MADE OUR DECISION ON BEHALF OF EUROPE, INDEPENDENTLY OF THE UNITED STATES."

4. SO FAR, OUR EC-9 COLLEAGUES DO NOT SEEM TO BE NERVOUS ABOUT THEIR BEING ASSOCIATED WITH THE ZAIRE OPERATION. IT SEEMS TO US THAT THE MORE EUROPE CAN SHOW SOME WILLINGNESS TO ACT IN TROUBLE SPOTS LIKE ZAIRE, THE BETTER FOR OVERALL US INTERESTS.

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Message Attributes

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